

Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA)

WHAT ARE **HPSAs**?

Locations or population groups that meet criteria to qualify for a federal designation that makes them eligible for more than 30 federal program resources and benefits.

WHICH LOCATIONS OR POPULATION GROUPS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR DESIGNATION?

- A distinct geographic area such as a county;
- A specific population group such as low-income individuals; or
- A specific health facility such as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC).

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE KEY DESIGNATION CRITERIA?

- Proposed service area must be rational. Rational Service Areas (RSA) may be whole county, established neighborhoods, populations with similar socio-economic characteristics, or an area with physical access barriers to health care services.
- Provider to population ratio.
- Travel time to reach provider.
- Indicators of high need such as infant mortality rate, poverty population, birth rate, or other barriers.

For more information on designation criteria: <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/hpsacrit.htm>

WHAT TYPES OF HEALTH PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINES MAY QUALIFY FOR A SHORTAGE DESIGNATION?

- The three disciplines are primary care, dental, and mental health.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PROGRAMS FOR WHICH A **HPSA** MAY BE ELIGIBLE?

- J-1 Visa Waiver Program
- National Health Services Corps
- Loan Assistance Repayment Program
- Enhanced Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement

The Maryland Primary Care Organization (PCO) facilitates the federal **HPSA** designation process. Designations are awarded at the federal level by the Shortage Designation Branch of the Bureau of Health Professions (BHPr). For more information, visit: http://fha.state.md.us/ohpp/pco/html/state_hpsas.cfm

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